

In the Specification

Please amend the specification as follows:

[0002] Currently available pet shelters did not adequately protect cats and other small pets from the effect of temperatures in cold environments. Such protection is desirable also in so called temperate climates because even there, the temperature outdoors frequently falls below the average person's refrigerator temperature which is about 38-42 degrees F. Many small animals that live unprotected in extreme low temperature climates experience discomfort and have an increased ~~the~~ risk of cold related illnesses and shorter life spans.

[0004] In light of the aforementioned risks to small pets and the unsuitability of prior art pet shelters there exists a need for a low cost pet shelter or habitat that encourages small pets to enter and to adjust a new environment. Accordingly, the desirable pet shelter should be adaptable to changing seasons and climates year round, as well as being sufficiently light weight to provide portability.

[0019] The construction of another preferred embodiment is illustrated in Figures 3A and 3B. Figure 3A is a perspective view of the habitat in Figure 2 as observed from the entry or portal side to display the upper surface and entry side of the habitat. This perspective view omits the optional upper cushion to illustrate the placement and attachment of an optional protective cover (formed from plastic or vinyl sheet wrapped around the outer surfaces of the structure.)

[0030] Sheet 600 is a 4 sided polygon having long non-parallel but opposing sides 600c and 600d, and substantially shorter opposing sides 600e and 600d, as shown in Figure 6A. Sheet 600 is wrapped to form the conical surface in Figure 6B by overlapping sides 600a and 600b at an angle that determines the cone angle by bringing edge 600b into alignment with reference line 600e. The point of overlap is labeled 600b-600e in FIG. 6B. As shown in Figure 6B adhesive tape 635 secures these overlapping edges together. Additionally, otherwise free edge 600a can be attached to the inside surface of sheet 600 by adhesive tape. The adhesive tape can be replaced by other joining methods, including but not limited to riveting, sewing, ultrasonic welding, and the like. Accordingly, the portion of the vinyl sheet in front of the entry portal can be the removed or slip as in the rectangular configuration in Figure 3. Thus, assembled outer cover 600' in Figure 6b is readily slipped over the top of habitat 500 from the narrower top. Accordingly, cover 601' is readily secured to habitat 500 by virtue of a slip fit by matching there respective

cone angles and dimension of sheet 600 to the length of side 502 of habitat 500. Flexible cover 600' has either an opening to correspond to the location of portal 510 on side surface 502 of habitat 500 or, as shown, is optionally slit along the dashed lines labeled by bracket with reference number 615 to form a series of deformable insulating flaps. An alternative to vinyl sheeting as protection for foam walls 502 is a shell or structural material disposed on the outer surface of sidewalls 502 as either an integral part of the insulating material or in lamination thereto.

[0032] Accordingly, Figure 7A illustrates the four of the six rigid foam panels that provide the insulating properties to habitat 700. Figure 7B illustrates the sixth panel 706 as having the circular hole 710 that forms a portion of the entrance portal of habitat 700. The external portion of habitat 700 is formed from a box 720 that has opening flaps 721 and 722 as illustrated figure 7C. The opening flaps 721 and 722 fully expose the interior of the box 720 permitting the insertion of foam panels 701, 702, 703, 704 and 706, as well as the fifth panel ~~which~~ panel, which is not illustrated. The fifth panel corresponds to the dimensions of panel 706, but generally does not include the circular hole 710. In order to form the assembly shown in Figure 5C rigid foam panels 704 is first inserted into the bottom of the box 720 to form at least a portion of the the floor of habit. Rigid foam panel is may cover the full width and length of the inside bottom of the box but is ~~preferably~~ preferably dimensioned so as to accommodate the vertical side panels being inserted between the side walls of the box and the vertically disposed edge of a horizontally disposed bottom panel 704. Next the four side panels (which includes panels 701, 703, and 706) are inserted flush against the inside vertical wall of box 720 resting on the bottom panel 704, and secured in the upright or vertical position being wedged between the internal surfaces of the sides of the box and panel 704. As illustrated in Figure 7d the illustrated side 720a of box 720 has a circular hole 723 constructed to form the external portal to the habitat. Accordingly, rigid foam side panel 706 is inserted into box 720 such that hole 710 is aligned with the corresponding and generally circular hole 723 on side 720a. The last of the four side foam panels is inserted flush against the inside surface of the box on the face opposed to sided 520a. The vertical dimensions of the side panels deliberately shorter than the height of box 720 such that the last of the six foam panels rests on the edges of the side panels 501 and 502 when inserted into box 720, forming the insulated roof of the habit. Thus, after all six foam panels are inserted and secured to the interior walls of box 720 the opening flaps 721 and 722 are folded down, as illustrated by the arrows in Figure 7C, to form the completed habitat, as illustrated in Figures 7E and 7F. It should be appreciated that flaps 721 and 722 are optionally sealed together by numerous means such that they remain in place covering the upper surface of rigid foam panel 702. Further, it should be apparent that that the placement of circular hole 710 in panel 706, and the corresponding circular hole 723 in side 720a of box 720, closer to one edge of face 720a can define the intended bottom of the enclosure, provided the foam panels are

otherwise secured so the assembly final enclosure 700 can inverted, as well as rotated by 90 degrees. Although flaps 721 and 722 of box 720 would be disposed in contact with supporting surface if the enclosure is inverted it is still desired that they are sealed with tape, adhesive, staples and the like. In addition, the box can also be closed by providing an extra length of flap that folds so that it can be tucked between the foam panel and the interior of the box. Such flaps may also be formed into a self interlocking assembly, as is known in the art of constructing storage boxes, such as "Banker Boxes" and the like.

[0037] Another embodiment of the invention is a kit for constructing an animal shelter. The kit comprises a prefabricated panel plastic based corrugated board adapted to be formed into a box having a least one portal on a portion of a side surface. The kit also comprises a plurality of substantially rigid foam boards having dimensions corresponding to the inside dimensions of each of the surface of the box to be formed from the prefabricated plastic panel. At least one panel has a hole formed therein which corresponds with the shape of the side of the box having the at least one portal.

[003738] While the invention has been described in connection with a preferred embodiment, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

[003839] A novel animal shelter or habitat is constructed from substantially rigid foam insulation for protecting a small pet from extreme temperatures outdoor or in semi-protected locations. The habitat preferably comprises side walls, a roof and floor constructed from rigid foam board, and has an appropriately sized portal on one side to minimize heat loss, thus providing for rapid warming and comfort via the retention of the animals own body heat. The rigid foam insulation on a side surfaces is preferably protected by an overlapping layer of vinyl sheet material. The construction provides for securing cushions or pillows over at least one of the interior or exterior horizontal surfaces, the cushion providing additional warmth and comfort so that the feline or other small pet readily adapts to the structure as their permanent habitat.